



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

# External Evaluation and Review Report



Skill New Zealand Limited

Date of report: 17 April 2025

# About Skill New Zealand Limited

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*Skill New Zealand (SNZ) provides a range of programmes with a focus on skills development, English language improvement, and gaining attributes and knowledge with direct relevance to industry sectors where there are opportunities for employment. The organisation's health and wellbeing programmes also help employees already in the workforce to progress in their employment.*

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Type of organisation:	Private training establishment (PTE)
Location:	Level 3, 22 Amersham Way, Manukau, Auckland
Eligible to enrol international students:	Yes
Number of students:	129 domestic students (119 equivalent full-time students); 22 per cent Pasifika and 7 per cent Māori; and 32 international students at the time of planning the EER
Number of staff:	12 full-time and six part-time equivalents
TEO profile:	<a href="#">Skill New Zealand</a> – provider page on NZQA website
Last EER outcome:	At the previous external evaluation and review (EER) of SNZ in 2021, NZQA was Highly Confident in the PTE's educational performance and Highly Confident in its capability in self-assessment.
Scope of evaluation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Equine Skills, comprising: New Zealand Certificate in Equine Skills (Level 2) version 2 (ID. 126862)</li><li>• Health and Wellbeing, comprising: New Zealand Certificate in Health and Wellbeing (Social and Community Services) (Level 4) version 2 (ID. 121710); and New Zealand Diploma in Health and Wellbeing (Applied Practice) (Level 5) version 2 (ID. 125614)</li><li>• International Students: Support and Wellbeing.</li></ul>

The evaluators visited three Auckland sites:  
Manukau, Karaka and Albany.

MoE number: 9471  
NZQA reference: C58695  
Dates of EER visit: 18-22 November 2024

# Summary of results

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*Students are mostly achieving well, and a good proportion of graduates gain employment in line with the subjects they have studied. Programmes, teaching resources, facilities and academic quality are all positive. A range of support services and interventions are in play to help the students, but evidence of how comprehensive or effective these are needs strengthening.*

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## **Confident in educational performance**

- Course and qualification completion rates are mostly strong, but withdrawals in the level 4 health programme are limiting achievement. Students are gaining skills, knowledge and attributes which prepare them for employment or further study in sectors congruent with the aims of the programme. Self-assessment of achievement is mostly robust.

## **Confident in capability in self-assessment**

- SNZ has positive relationships with stakeholders and aligns the teaching to their needs; the programme portfolio is current and well maintained. SNZ has demonstrated strong external moderation engagement and performance with workforce development councils and external moderation partners.
- There is sound evidence that a good proportion of graduates gain employment in line with the subjects they have studied. Documentation supporting alignment with stakeholder needs and determining graduate outcomes is sound.
- Tutors are suitably qualified and are engaging well with the students, although many of them are new to the programme they are teaching.
- Students state that they enjoy the learning environment and programme content, and are most often well supported, particularly by the tutors. Evidence of the effectiveness of student support is strongest at the individual student level. It is weaker when the focus is on use of data, involvement of staff in review, and evidencing a comprehensive and well-integrated support function – at least at the time of this evaluation.

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- SNZ is deeply committed to cultural diversity, fostering an inclusive environment where students are actively connected across programmes and sites.
  - SNZ uses data drawn from improved IT systems to monitor and review its programmes, as well as student and other survey feedback. Although not a major fault, some elements of self-assessment could be more explicit on action points and identifying the impacts of changes made.
  - Compliance management is generally sound, with a few non-critical gaps.

# Key evaluation question findings<sup>1</sup>

## 1.1 How well do students achieve?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Overall, domestic student course completion at SNZ has increased each year since the last EER. However, Pasifika student course completion has declined, from 78 per cent to 68 per cent for 2020-23. For the relatively small number of Māori students, course completion has varied and is slightly lower than non-Māori/non-Pasifika for the same period. SNZ is still working on generating and using accurate student data relating to disabled students' achievements and outcomes. The pandemic was a very challenging time for the PTE's south Auckland student demographic, and it affected pass rates.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>For Equine Skills level 2, from September 2021 to July 2024, 90 per cent of the students achieved a qualification. Forty-three of the 48 non-Māori/non-Pasifika students completed; eight of the nine Māori students completed. There were no Pasifika enrolments.</p> <p>Qualification completions for Health and Wellbeing level 4 averaged 71 per cent (2020-24); for level 5 (2022-24), 94 per cent achieved a qualification. Most of the level 4 enrolments are Pasifika and Māori students, and their withdrawal or non-achievement rate is higher than the non-Māori/non-Pasifika comparator group. Student withdrawal rates average 30 per cent year-on-year in the level 4 Health and Wellbeing programme. These rates often appear to be aligned with challenges in managing full-time study alongside other demands, not least part-time work in health care.<sup>3</sup></p>

<sup>1</sup> The findings in this report are derived using a standard process and are based on a targeted sample of the organisation's activities.

<sup>2</sup> [Service Uptake Challenges Experienced by Pasifika Communities during COVID-19 Lockdowns in New Zealand.](#)

<sup>3</sup> High withdrawal rates have also been identified in similar health and wellbeing programmes at other tertiary organisations undergoing EER in 2024.

	<p>Almost all international students have passed their courses and completed their qualification. They typically have a higher previous educational attainment than their domestic peers, based on the sample of files audited by NZQA and interviews with a small group. They have strong representation in the health and wellbeing cohorts and share a common goal of securing a work rights visa.</p> <p>Oversight of assessment is centralised and well documented. SNZ uses its internal and external moderation systems to ensure valid results. Aggregation and analysis of findings could be improved to establish and share trends.</p> <p>There has been ongoing and positive engagement with two workforce development councils and other, non-regulatory, external moderation partners. The programme reviews and other self-assessment activities are similarly robust. They show that the PTE is clear about the reasons for student discontinuance. SNZ has improved the range and timing of support to improve achievement.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>Course and qualification completion rates are mostly strong, with some gaps. Students are gaining skills, knowledge and attributes that prepare them for employment or further study in sectors congruent with the aims of the programme. Self-assessment is mostly robust, but improvement patterns in achievement are somewhat inconsistent. Support needs require earlier identification and coordination of services.</p>

## 1.2 What is the value of the outcomes for key stakeholders, including students?

Performance:	<b>Excellent</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Excellent</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>There were 126 level 4 graduates for the health and wellbeing programmes for 2020-23; 75 per cent of these were in health-related employment around the time of graduation. There were another 29 graduates from the level 5 Health and Wellbeing qualification (2022-July 2024). Eighty-three per cent of these were in employment at the time of graduation. Health-related stakeholders contacted by the evaluators confirmed that students gain entry-level positions. Most commonly, this is at the health</p>

	<p>care assistant level or equivalent, depending on the setting. These roles are in elder care, mental health support and roles supporting physically and intellectually disabled people. Some graduates have progressed to acute and specialist care positions, or hospital-based roles.<sup>4</sup> These are valuable outcomes within a context of the ageing population and a shortage of health workers, which has led to adjustments to visa settings to attract overseas applicants.</p> <p>The health and wellbeing programmes include work-based learning, enabling work experience and earning potential after a limited time in study. This transition is particularly sought after by international students. Some graduates have progressed to enrolled nurse and registered nurse training since the last EER.</p> <p>The relatively new equine programme also has strong outcomes. There was good evidence that the broad scope of entry-level learning is valued by employers and work placement providers. Graduates are being employed in a range of equine settings, and around 25 per cent pathway to the PTE's level 3 programme. For some, this is their first formal qualification. Thirty-seven per cent have achieved entry-level employment.</p> <p>Interaction with stakeholders and maintaining alignment with their needs is positive. The programme portfolio is current and well maintained. In particular, formal and current arrangements or agreements with health care providers adds value for both those employers and SNZ students.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>There is sound evidence that a good proportion of graduates gain employment or progress to higher-level programmes in line with the subjects they have studied. SNZ's documentation of programme monitoring and review, practicums and graduate destinations is also sound, and provides evidence of the programmes' match with funder, stakeholder and student needs.</p>

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<sup>4</sup> Some students were already employed in health sector roles at the time of study, and completed the qualification to further their skills, knowledge and responsibilities.



### 1.3 How well do programme design and delivery, including learning and assessment activities, match the needs of students and other relevant stakeholders?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>The focus area programmes are correctly aligned with the PTE’s NZQA approvals. They are also well aligned with student and stakeholder needs and are subject to close managerial and operational monitoring on a week-by-week basis. Although they have had comprehensive review, the equine programmes would benefit from a fresh review, ideally involving the new PTE staff. Programme review would improve overall by including a developmental aspect, involving more staff and including Code of Practice<sup>5</sup> elements.</p> <p>Tutor and support staff attrition is notable since the last EER. Four of the six teaching staff in the focus area programmes have been employed for one year or less. The PTE has hired suitably qualified, confident and competent new staff, but expertise in a new context takes time to develop.</p> <p>The new staff are well qualified and experienced. They are engaging with their students and have made some improvements. Tutor observations, for example, are used to focus on consistency and improve teaching and learning, and these have been strengthened recently. All staff have participated in relevant professional development, including assessor training.</p> <p>SNZ has a vibrant campus culture at the main Manukau campus. There is strong attention to cultural diversity and connecting the students, and the PTE has hosted social events and some course-specific field trips. Students and graduates described a vibrant and active campus life, which they enjoy.</p> <p>Students at other sites benefit from appropriate facilities and a positive relationship with, typically, one main tutor. Student voice elements are also strong: regular, well-designed online surveys have strong response rates;</p>

<sup>5</sup> [Education \(Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners\) Code of Practice 2021](#)

	<p>student spokesperson roles are in use; and students described their tutors as approachable.</p> <p>Facilities and resources are suitable for both the equine and health and wellbeing programmes. The student learning system implemented during the pandemic is well embedded and effectively supports health and wellbeing student learning. This is particularly important for the health and wellbeing students who are studying off-campus when they complete the 300-700 hours of structured work placement, depending on mode.</p> <p>The current review of the procedure for and frequency of workplace monitoring visits in the health and wellbeing programme should be progressed and changes implemented as a priority. Most of the industry stakeholders and graduates interviewed were satisfied that monitoring is regular and rigorous. However, in some student and graduate surveys there is additional critique around this aspect, indicating variability. The quality of monitoring is crucial. It is linked to the verification of skills, assessment evidence, and the competence and application shown by students in work settings involving vulnerable health consumers. Improvements are required.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>The programmes are current and well aligned with NZQA approvals and student and stakeholder needs. A strong emphasis is placed on feedback gained through regular surveys. Although the tutors are suitably qualified and engaging well with the students, most are new to the programme they are teaching. SNZ needs to undertake a thorough review and policy reset of the monitoring visits in the health and wellbeing programmes.</p>

#### 1.4 How effectively are students supported and involved in their learning?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Marginal</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>Students enjoy the learning environment and programme content, and are mostly well supported, particularly by the tutors. Survey data confirms that this has been the case. Elements such as pre-enrolment guidance, orientation,</p>

	<p>clear handbooks, course guides and ILPs<sup>6</sup> are in active use. SNZ offers workshops on CV writing and job interviews, time management and support for English language and assignment writing. Free online counselling services have been available to all students since the last EER. Data on the uptake and effectiveness of the supports listed above is relatively limited.</p> <p>SNZ is deeply committed to cultural diversity, fostering an inclusive environment where students are actively connected across programmes and sites. As noted, the PTE has hosted social events, guest speakers and course-specific field trips as part of required bicultural course components. Students and graduates described a vibrant and active campus life. The PTE holds regular online surveys with good response rates; student representative/spokesperson roles are also in use. PTE staff and management value and use this data and other qualitative feedback from students in their reviews.</p> <p>Code of Practice review has occurred each year using NZQA tools; this is led by the quality assurance manager. These reviews are reasonably comprehensive when providing a summary of policy and processes. They could be improved by actively working with data on inputs or teasing out events or situations to provide evidence of effectiveness. The PTE's self-ratings are plausible and defensible considering the current structure. The overall rating is that the Code is being 'Implemented'.</p> <p>There were indications that some students have felt underprepared or unsupported, most notably those in the placement phase of the health and wellbeing programmes. Given that SNZ has a number of relatively new staff, it would be desirable to see staff professional development focusing on the pastoral care of the students. There is similarly a need to better engage all teaching and support staff in self-assessment of the Code. This would ensure 'front-line' perspectives are captured and would immerse staff in a more Code-centric approach to their work.</p> <p>There has been a relatively recent change to the senior leadership structure at the PTE; particularly relevant here are the responsibilities of the campus manager. In addition, there is a new PTE administrator and a new student</p>
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<sup>6</sup> Individual learning plans designed with input from each student.

	<p>recruitment and support advisor, both reporting to the campus manager.</p> <p>Evidence of the use of data to demonstrate effectiveness and show a coherent support function is still emerging. Given the student profile, NZQA suggests that SNZ design a better-defined leadership role and clearer, better-aligned team member responsibilities. Currently, the overall student support structure is only generally convincing.</p>
Conclusion:	<p>The PTE's narrative on student support was strongest at the individual student level: what was going on for the student, and how that person was supported to be retained, succeed or otherwise. The narrative was weaker when the focus was on the use of data, involvement of staff in reviews, and evidencing a comprehensive and well-integrated support function.</p>

### 1.5 How effective are governance and management in supporting educational achievement?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>SNZ has effective leadership, management and oversight. Management uses reliable data drawn from improved IT systems to enable ongoing monitoring and review. The PTE delivers on its educational plans and commitments. It also has useful partnerships and academic connections which provide it with performance benchmarks.</p> <p>According to SNZ data and Ngā Kete data from the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), the PTE enrolls a significant proportion of priority group students.<sup>7</sup> It also has a strong international student and new migrant enrolment rate. There is a culturally diverse and economically wide-ranging student cohort. About 50 per cent of enrolments are at level 3 or lower, so there is notable attention paid to attracting underserved and younger students. Within this, the ILN-ESOL<sup>8</sup> cohorts are all Asian migrants, mainly resident Chinese and mainly over 50 years of age. The PTE is reaching a diverse and economically varied student</p>

<sup>7</sup> Māori, Pasifika and students with a disability.

<sup>8</sup> Intensive Literacy and Numeracy, English for Speakers of Other Languages.

	<p>cohort, which aligns well with the PTE’s strategic plan, mission and values. It also aligns well with the TEC’s funding targets for student achievement.</p> <p>The integration and roll-out of iQualify as a resource supporting educational performance since the pandemic is a major piece of work and sets up the PTE well for planned programme expansion. The overall quality, utility and attractiveness of the sites is notable, including the new site for ILN-ESOL in Albany. The Equine Skills facility at Karaka, and the learning/assessment materials in use there – as well as nearby work experience opportunities – seem well aligned to the positive educational achievement and valued outcomes reported earlier.</p> <p>The new staff recruited have appropriate qualifications and experience for their roles. Tutors in the health and wellbeing programmes include teachers with PhD and/or Master’s-level health qualifications. Equine Skills teaching staff have current experience and extensive networks in the industry. The programme leader has a MPsych which is proving valuable as there are neurodiverse and non-binary students requiring differentiated teaching and pastoral support. Previous staff teaching in the focus area programmes also performed well based on student survey results and graduate interviews.</p> <p>The evaluators suggested that the recruiting, interviewing and onboarding of students may benefit from greater role clarity. Further to that, the campus administration role (covering multiple sites and programmes) reporting to a campus manager does not align convincingly with the notion of a comprehensive ‘student support team’. This is not to say students are unsupported. However, more self-assessment evidence is needed to confirm that the allocation of sufficient resources and sustainable workloads across the PTE is optimal, given changes and plans for growth. Staff turnover, particularly of tutors, was noted by the evaluation team.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>The organisational culture, the environment surrounding the students, and the teamwork among staff at SNZ are evident and positive across all elements. Overall, the collegiality and shared focus on student success is strong, but key operational staff are relatively new to the PTE. Some staffing arrangements are only generally convincing. See Recommendations below.</p>

## 1.6 How effectively are important compliance accountabilities managed?

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>
Findings and supporting evidence:	<p>SNZ has managed well its alignment with NZQA accountabilities as a PTE. All teaching sites are correct and approved, and those visited by the evaluators reflect the amenities as stated in applications. The focus area programmes are correctly aligned with approvals: duration, course content, qualification version, and information provided to students. Protocols for moderation and accepting student results and resits are clear and appear to be well followed. The PTE is operating a current quality management system, including appraisal of staff. The PTE has participated in national external moderation and consistency review as scheduled, with exemplary results.</p> <p>A limited scope audit of international student files raised no concerns. All files sought were readily accessible, and the samples met or exceeded minimum requirements, except for one student who did not follow clear guidance to purchase insurance before leaving India. Appropriate insurance is arranged by the PTE on the day the student presents at the PTE (i.e. during the induction process). Within this sample, police vetting requirements have been completed for all students as required in the programme approval and by the health providers receiving students for placement.</p> <p>Since the last EER, between 6 and 31 per cent of students' results were reported to NZQA outside the three-month requirement. The PTE described technical issues with their upgraded student management system syncing correctly with NZQA. This mainly affected the 2022-23 results, and the PTE supplied communications with NZQA and the student management system vendor about resolving this. SNZ has improved its reporting of results (16 per cent were reported late in 2024).</p> <p>SNZ assessors have appropriate qualifications. Interaction with workforce development councils is also highly satisfactory. For example, Toitū Te Waiora completed a site</p>

	<p>visit in November 2023, leading to endorsement of the PTE's application for a youth work programme.</p> <p>A routine TEC audit in 2022 found that 'systems, processes and practices are acceptable, with minor nonconformities. Improvements will need to be monitored'. Of 12 focus areas, six were compliant, five needed improvement and one did not comply. Some single data returns needed to be resubmitted due to a withdrawal date error. This has been corrected and so the data provided to the TEC and NZQA is now accurate.</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<p>SNZ's compliance management is generally sound, with a few non-critical gaps which have been well managed.</p>

# Focus areas

*This section reports significant findings in each focus area, not already covered in Part 1.*

## 2.1 Equine Skills

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>

## 2.2 Health and Wellbeing

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>

## 2.3 International Students: Support and Wellbeing

Performance:	<b>Good</b>
Self-assessment:	<b>Good</b>



# Recommendations

*Recommendations are not mandatory but their implementation may improve the quality and effectiveness of the training and education provided by the tertiary education organisation (TEO). They may be referred to in subsequent external evaluation and reviews (EERs) to gauge the effectiveness of the TEO's quality improvements over time.*

NZQA recommends that Skill New Zealand Limited:

1. Ensure the current review of the procedure for and frequency of workplace monitoring visits in the health and wellbeing programmes is progressed and implemented as soon as practicable. (This relates to key evaluation question 3 and, more specifically, focus area 2.)
2. Increase the focus on professional development for staff in applying the Code of Practice. This might include team conversations, NZQA seminars, conferences or wider PTE-focused seminars on support and guidance (relates to key evaluation question 4).
3. Better engage all teaching and support staff in Code self-assessment, to ensure 'front-line' perspectives are included, but also to deepen staff immersion in using the Code as a key element and approach to their work. NZQA advises publication of the self-review where it is more readily available externally to meet the information needs of learners, stakeholders and the general public (relates to key evaluation question 4).
4. Make better use of survey data. Data could be more meaningful if survey response rates – and the total number of respondents for each question and rating – were routinely stated whenever that data is used internally or externally to the PTE (relates to key evaluation questions 1-5).
5. Review the student support structure, role definitions, responsibilities and their implementation; and build stronger evidence of service uptake and effectiveness. This is currently lacking. (This relates to key evaluation question 5.)

# Requirements

*Requirements relate to the TEO's statutory obligations under legislation that governs their operation. This include NZQA Rules and relevant regulations promulgated by other agencies.*

There are no requirements arising from the external evaluation and review.

# Appendix

## Conduct of external evaluation and review

*All external evaluation and reviews are conducted in accordance with NZQA's published rules. The methodology used is described in the web document <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>. The TEO has an opportunity to comment on the accuracy of this report, and any submissions received are fully considered by NZQA before finalising the report.*

## Disclaimer

*The findings in this report have been reached by means of a standard evaluative process. They are based on a representative selection of focus areas, and a sample of supporting information provided by the TEO under review or independently accessed by NZQA. As such, the report's findings offer a guide to the relative quality of the TEO at the time of the EER, in the light of the known evidence, and the likelihood that this level of quality will continue.*

*For the same reason, these findings are always limited in scope. They are derived from selections and samples evaluated at a point in time. The supporting methodology is not designed to:*

- *Identify organisational fraud<sup>9</sup>*
- *Provide comprehensive coverage of all programmes within a TEO, or of all relevant evidence sources*
- *Predict the outcome of other reviews of the same TEO which, by posing different questions or examining different information, could reasonably arrive at different conclusions.*

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<sup>9</sup> NZQA and the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) comprehensively monitor risk in the tertiary education sector through a range of other mechanisms. When fraud, or any other serious risk factor, has been confirmed, corrective action is taken as a matter of urgency.

## Regulatory basis for external evaluation and review

*External evaluation and review is conducted under the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022, which are made by NZQA under section 452(1)(t) of the Education and Training Act 2020 and approved by the NZQA Board and the Minister of Education.*

*Self-assessment and participation and cooperation in external evaluation and review are requirements for:*

- maintaining accreditation to provide an approved programme for all TEOs other than universities, and*
- maintaining consent to assess against standards on the Directory of Assessment Standards for all TEOs excluding universities, and*
- maintaining micro-credential approval for all TEOs other than universities.*

*The requirements for participation and cooperation are set through the Programme Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022, the Consent to Assess Against Standards on the Directory of Assessment and Skill Standards Rules 2022 and the Micro-credential Approval and Accreditation Rules 2022 respectively.*

*In addition, the Private Training Establishment Registration Rules 2022 require registered private training establishments to undertake self-assessment and participate in external evaluation and review as a condition of maintaining registration.*

*NZQA is responsible for ensuring non-university TEOs continue to comply with the rules after the initial granting of approval and accreditation of programmes, micro-credentials and consents to assess and registration. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) has statutory responsibility for compliance by universities.*

*This report reflects the findings and conclusions of the external evaluation and review process, conducted according to the Quality Assurance (including External Evaluation and Review (EER)) Rules 2022. The report identifies strengths and areas for improvement in terms of the organisation's educational performance and capability in self-assessment.*

*External evaluation and review reports are one contributing piece of information in determining future funding decisions where the organisation is a funded TEO subject to an investment plan agreed with the Tertiary Education Commission.*

*External evaluation and review reports are public information and are available from the NZQA website ([www.nzqa.govt.nz](http://www.nzqa.govt.nz)). All rules cited above are available at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/about-us/our-role/legislation/nzqa-rules/>, while information about the conduct and methodology for external evaluation and review can be found at <https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/providers-partners/external-evaluation-and-review/>.*

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